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# Bridge Across the Divide: Rewriting a New Historical Narrative in Derry~Londonderry

Elena Bilodeau  
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## Bridge Across the Divide: Rewriting a New Historical Narrative in Derry~Londonderry



Elena Bilodeau

SIT Ireland: Transformation of Social and Political Conflict

Academic Director: Aeveen Kerrisk

Project Advisor: Elizabeth Crooke, PhD (British Academy) Cambridge University

## **Abstract**

This report is the outcome of a month-long study on the Peace Bridge in Derry~Londonderry. It is an investigation of the importance history plays in the peace process of Northern Ireland. The goal of this study was to assess the success of the Peace Bridge in helping the city to overcome an inherited historical memory. Data was obtained through formal interviews, surveys of users on the bridge, various forms of literature, and participant observation.

Through these methods, it can be concluded that the Peace Bridge has successfully increased cross-community interaction in the city. This has been achieved through the creation or reinvention of shared public space free of sectarian symbols or associations. These shared spaces have become neutral gathering points that people from both sides of the River Foyle can enjoy, but are only a portion of the long-term process of conflict transformation within the city. The bridge itself has become a defining symbol of the city of Derry~Londonderry and holds a key role in the reinvention of the city's identity.

More research on this topic is necessary in order to understand the full-scale effect the bridge has had on the community. Obtaining opinions from a larger demographic of people including: politicians, community workers, youth, and residents of isolated communities, would help to shape a broader picture of what had been achieved and what problems still need to be addressed. Because this paper is focused on the recent development of the city, it would be beneficial to reexamine this topic in a few years time to see if public opinion has shifted.

## **Acknowledgements**

This paper is essentially the sum of the experiences I have had and the people I have met during this semester. There are a few people I need to thank who have contributed directly to the formation of this paper.

First I would like to thank my advisor, Elizabeth Crooke, for helping me to organize and focus my topic and pointing me in the right direction by introducing me to different organizations and sites in Derry~Londonderry that had a profound impact on my project.

Second, I would like to thank my Academic Director, Aeveen Kerrisk who has been a constant source of support on so many levels. Thank you for your advice and encouragement throughout this process. Your excitement and passion for the growth of each student is contagious and has made this daunting independent study project an enjoyable and enlightening experience.

Lastly I would like to thank my various “families.” To my Derry host family, I thank you for sharing your passion for your city with me. You made my field research period the perfect combination of productive and fun. To Carmel, my host mother in Dublin, I thank you for the countless cups of tea and laughs we have shared throughout the semester. I especially thank you for your humor during the ISP writing week without which I might have gone crazy. To my SIT Ireland family, my fellow classmates, I want to thank you for an incredible semester. Each of you have shaped this incredible experience and I wouldn’t have wanted to share it with anyone else. Finally, I would like to thank my family back home in Vermont for their constant support and encouragement throughout this study abroad experience.

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## **Part 1: Introduction**

During my three-week study throughout Northern Ireland, I became interested in the themes of commemoration and memory. The recent flags protests in Belfast, the contentious parade season, and even the proposal of a museum at the Long Kesh Prison site, prove that memory of the past still dictates present-day events. The attachment to history seems to be a significant roadblock in the peace process. How can this hindrance be overcome? This is a question I struggled with as I learned more about the Northern Ireland conflict. In a society where a historical interpretation is forced to identify with one side or the other, how could there ever be peace? This question weighed heavily on my decision to conduct a field study on the Peace Bridge in Derry~Londonderry<sup>1</sup>. Not only was the bridge a monument to the peace the city has successfully maintained over the past few years, it is also an intended peacemaker in itself: bridging the gap between the Catholic majority and Protestant minority communities on both sides of the river.

## **Methodology**

In my previous studies on conflict, both in the Republic and Northern Ireland, I have learned that conflict transformation is anything but simple and requires work from the highest government official to the community worker who interacts with people on a daily basis. There seemed to be a larger story to tell about the Peace Bridge and that has been the driving force behind this project. Before beginning the independent research, I was expecting to get mixed

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<sup>1</sup> The use of term “Derry~Londonderry” originates from the idea that the city is currently working towards a shared and united future that acknowledges all citizens. The urban regeneration company, Ilex, and the UK City of Culture both use this term. It will also be used in this paper to refer to the city, with a few exceptions in references to events and organizations that specify the use “Derry” or “Londonderry” in the title.

reviews on the bridge. After all, a bridge is a physical structure that joins two pieces of land, but it doesn't necessarily join the communities. As I conducted research, I realized Ebrington Barracks was the perfect lens to examine the effectiveness of the bridge. The Ebrington site, which remained militarized until 2003, is a symbol of occupation and a link to the past. The Peace Bridge connected the city center directly with the Waterside via Ebrington Barracks, a site which has played a crucial role in the history of Derry~Londonderry, and has carried a strong legacy of symbolism for some residents over the years.

In order to conduct a thorough field study, I have engaged with the topic through many different layers. According to educator Eduard Lindeman, "The interpretation of an event can only be approximately correct when it contains two points of view: the outside and the inside (Lindeman 1924)." In order to understand both the outside and inside perspective, I have used a combination of personal experiences, observations, interviews, surveys, and literary research in my project. Each of these holds an important role within my field study and provides me with a balanced picture from which I can attempt to draw conclusions.

## **Literature Review**

Because there is very little scholarly research on the Peace Bridge, I identified key themes to research that would help broaden my understanding throughout the field study. The first stages of my project centered on examining effects of commemoration and memory in a Northern Ireland context. The book, *Symbols in Northern Ireland*, edited by Anthony D. Buckley is a collection of articles by various experts and scholars who examine the importance of parades, bonfires, murals, and other iconography in Northern Ireland. Neil Jarman's article, "Painting landscapes: the place of murals in the symbolic construction of urban space," provided

me with a better understanding of the power of symbols in a public space. Jarman argues that murals are often examined just for their content, but the location and the affect the mural has on this space is just as important. Jarman bases his claims on the ideas of Roland Barthes (1977): “meaning is always contextual, the text always escapes the control of the author, and is always open to new interpretations (97).”

Another important text that contributed to a broader knowledge of the use of symbols in Northern Ireland was Dominic Bryan’s article, “Symbols in Peace and Conflict.” Bryan is also an advocate for examining symbols in context. He states: “Symbols are in themselves, meaningless; they do not have innate meaning. Human beings give them meaning. As such symbols become multi-vocal, that is, they gain layers of meaning.” Both Bryan’s and Jarman’s articles allowed me to see the importance symbolism plays in regards to collective memory of the Troubles and how locations of these symbols give more insight into the interpreted meaning of the symbol.

In addition to books and journal articles, three different reports on the bridge and Ebrington sites were consulted. The first report, “Face-to-Face Field Survey ‘Ebrington Site – Attitudinal and Resident Movement Baseline Survey – Impact of Peace Bridge Derry~Londonderry,” produced by Social Capital (North West) C.I.C. and the second report “Peace Bridge: Peace and Reconciliation Indicators” produced by Ilex helped to develop my understanding of wider public opinion before the opening of the bridge and supplement the survey of 10 people conducted on the Peace Bridge specifically for this field study. The third report, “Conservation Statement on the Heritage Value of Ebrington Barracks” gave me



information about the history of the Ebrington site from its building until present day, and the importance of preserving this history.

Online resources such as databases, news sites, and organization websites, were an important part of this field study. Websites such as CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet): Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland, based within the University of Ulster is a reference website, which provided me with a range of information including photographs, maps, and statistics about the history of the conflict in Derry~Londonderry. News sites such as BBC Northern Ireland, UTV, and the Irish Independent allowed me to examine the various events happening in the city of Derry~Londonderry relating to the bridge, and the surrounding areas. These news sites provided me with the opinion and statements of public officials that I would otherwise not have access to. Finally, the websites of different organizations, especially Ilex and the City of Culture websites, allowed me to understand the role the bridge has played in the redevelopment and the rebranding of Derry~Londonderry.

### **First Hand Sources**

This project was heavily influence by interviews conducted with both experts and people in Derry~Londonderry. During the field study two types of interviews were conducted: formal and survey. Both these types of interviews proved valuable in accommodating the varying types of people who participated.

Because the nature of this project focused on the effectiveness of the Peace Bridge in facilitating a new historical narrative for the city, it was important to engage with users of the bridge. In order to obtain public opinion, a short 6-question survey was created (See Appendix 1). Throughout a two-week period, a total of 10 users of the Peace Bridge were interviewed at

different times of the day. Of the 10 participants, only 1 had a negative response to the bridge. Based on the comments received through the survey, themes and trends began to emerge, even within this small pool of data, which helped to direct and focus the research and formal interviews.

In addition to surveys, which attempted to gauge public opinion, figures who worked directly with the bridge were also interviewed. The first formal interview was with Alan Armstrong, an employee of Ilex, the urban regeneration company formed by the government of Northern Ireland. Armstrong is the site manager for the Ebrington Barracks regeneration and was able to comment on the goals he has for the area and the changing public perception of the barracks.

Armstrong was also able to recommend a fellow Ilex colleague, Angela Hughes, who works in the strategy department, specifically in regards to the Peace Bridge. I met with Angela and she was able to provide a summary of the steps Ilex took to interact with the public and community in order to make the bridge successful. She was also able to provide the report “Peace Bridge: Peace and Reconciliation Indicators (See Literature Review above)” as well as recent statistics on usage of the bridge.

The final interview was with Jeanette Warke, founder of the Cathedral Youth Center in the Fountain<sup>2</sup>, and active community worker. Because Jeanette works with a number of families from the Fountain and Waterside communities on a daily basis, she was able to provide a perspective that many Protestant families share in terms of the bridge. She also spoke about how the opening of the bridge has changed Youth Center activities and her own routines and habits.

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<sup>2</sup> The Fountain is a small Protestant community living on the west bank of the Foyle situated just outside the walls.

Jeanette's perspective proved to be an extremely important element to this field study as the survey interviews did not specify religion.

In preparation for my formal interviews, a list of questions relative to the interviewee's expertise was developed; however, these questions were only used as guidelines. I believe this was an essential part of the interviewing process as much of the new content collected from each interview came from follow-up questions that were only loosely connect to the original list.

At the start of two of my formal interviews, permission was asked to use a voice recorder. This allowed me to focus on what was being said and I was able to construct follow-up questions rather than taking notes. Upon completion of an interview, the recording was reviewed, notes taken, themes identified, and important quotations were transcribed for later use in a field notes journal. This proved to be an important part of the research: as new themes emerged, I was able to review my notes of past interviews and make new connections with new information.

In addition to my surveys and formal interviews, time was set aside for observation on the Peace Bridge, Guildhall Square, St. Columb's Park, and Ebrington Barracks. During these times, a field notebook was used to record the types of people, interactions, and activities going on in the area. During my stay in Derry~Londonderry I also visited different events in these areas including a local market and the celebrations for the Dalai Lama Visit which spanned from Guildhall Square, across the Peace Bridge, to the Venue on the Waterside. These observations and experiences have allowed me to better understand how these public areas are used on a daily basis and for special events.

One of the most important elements of field study is physically being present in the field, not only to have access to interviews, but also to be exposed to other relevant experiences:

“Fieldwork is the systematic study through interactions and observations of everyday life (Bailey 1966).” During this field study in Derry~Londonderry, there were two important events that helped to shape my understanding of the city. The first was that Derry~Londonderry was named the 2013 City of Culture. The city has embraced this title whole-heartedly and events throughout the city aim to bring tourists and locals from all different backgrounds together for a celebration of unity. The second event that took place in Derry~Londonderry during my field study was the death of Margaret Thatcher. During my last week in Derry~Londonderry, the Free Derry Wall became a gathering place to celebrate the death of the Former Prime Minister, another symbol of British occupation. Below the renowned text: “You are now entering Free Derry” someone had spray-painted: “Ding dong the witch is dead!” The existence of these monuments and their significance in present day society illustrate that for some people, the past holds a largely prominent role in present day events.

As with any field study, my project posed a few challenges. The first challenge arose from the uniqueness of the Peace Bridge itself. The concept of creating a physical bridge to create cross-community interaction is uncharted territory. As it opened in 2011, there is hardly any scholarly literature written on the bridge. This was challenging in the early stages of the field study when I was identifying possible informers and interviewees. The lack of available literature specifically on the Peace Bridge forced me to identify specific themes such as legacy, memory, and redevelopment to research and draw parallels to this new structure. I also faced some difficulties during my survey process. In the beginning, I found it difficult to survey a diverse demographic of people. I attempted to balance my surveys in terms of gender and age,

however, I found that women were willing to participate more than men, and adults were more willing to participate than teenagers.

## **Part 2: Analysis**

I began this field study by asking the question: Can a bridge help a community overcome an inherited historical memory? In this paper, I first explain the importance of looking at the building of the Peace Bridge through a historical lens and how the River Foyle has facilitated in the division of the community. Second I will assess the success of the bridge in writing a new historical narrative for the city of Derry~Londonderry through the used of shared and neutral space. Finally, I will discuss how the formation of a new historical narrative has allowed the city to explore a new identity that acknowledges the importance of the past but emphasizes the present.

### Living History: The Importance of History in the Present

*“Whoever controls the past controls the future. Whoever controls the present controls the past.”*  
– George Orwell

What I have discovered during my three months of studying conflict in different regions of Ireland is the significance history has to present day society. You cannot simply look at current events in isolation; to do so would undermine and over-simplify the layers historical memory brings to society today. One of my first experiences with this concept was in county Mayo on the west coast of Ireland, within the community affected by the Corrib gas project. In my report titled, “A Picture Worth One Thousand Stories: Understanding the Corrib Gas Conflict Through Personal Narrative” I wrote:

Author Michael McCaughan notes, “This is a community which takes pride in mapping out local place names and restoring gravestones, maintaining a connection between past, present, and future (Now You Are Talking My Language).” In an area possessing so many layers of history, it is impossible to unravel the past from present day. We spoke with retired school teacher Micheál O’Saighin and he noted that the echos of the past are important for daily life. The presence of the past can be physical, with ancient ruins dotting the landscape or gravestones placed a few years ago. But the past is also present in the retelling of stories and in the mindset of the people and is often awakened in times of struggle. (Bilodeau p.2)

Remembering the past is an important part of identity and culture throughout the entire island, both north and south. Memory, however, can sometimes hold people in the past rather than connecting them fluidly with the present. In the report produced by the Belfast based organization, Healing Through Remembering, titled “At the End of the Day: Commemoration – Forward Thinking into the Past” Dr. James Nagle, “found that commemorative practices can evoke what he called ‘a timeless continuity with the past,’ but on the flip side of this is that commemoration can simultaneously ‘serve as a rite to signify rupture from tradition (8).’” In regards to examining the Peace Bridge in Derry~Londonderry, I have asked the question: Can a bridge help a community overcome an inherited historical memory? This memory extends much further back than the memory of current generations.

### **The River Foyle: A History of Division**

The River Foyle has played a significant role in the history of Derry~Londonderry. The river, which feeds into Lough Foyle and eventually the Atlantic Ocean has served the purposes of defense, trade, industry, division, and leisure. The area along the banks of the Foyle has been inhabited from as early as the 6<sup>th</sup> century with the formation of St. Columba's monastery. Renamed the anglicized name of Derrie after the Irish name Doire meaning "oak grove," modern day Derry~Londonderry was founded in 1604 by James I. The city, settled through the Plantation of Ulster, completed its walls in 1618 in order to protect the early English and Scottish settlers from the attacks of the Irish (BBC Siege of Derry). The city has a turbulent history of war, siege, and civil unrest. The river itself has played an important role in marking territory and division.

One of the most significant events surrounding the River Foyle is the famous Siege of Derry. For over 100 days, the city closed its doors to the Jacobite army. Thousands died of starvation before the army of King William of Orange liberated them. During the siege, the Jacobies had placed a boom across the river to stop any ships from entering the city. When the Mountjoy, a merchant ship sent to relieve the city, did not break through the block, sailors were dispatched in longboats to cut the obstruction with hatchets (BBC Siege of Derry). The river, once blockaded with the boom, now ushered the ships into the harbor to give relief to those within the walls.

The River Foyle also played a significant role in modern history as a natural divide that exacerbates a social divide. The Civil Rights Movement marked a critical point in the division of the city of Derry~Londonderry. The Catholic majority in the city protested against their unequal representation in government. According to a 1968 BBC news broadcast titled "Ulster in Focus," There were 9,000 unionist voters in the city which elected 12 members to the

Derry~Londonderry City Council. For the 14,000 nationalist votes, only 9 members were elected (Open Reel Productions). Gerrymandering, the manipulation of districts for election purposes was the cause of this misrepresentation. Tensions were high during this time and clashes between the RUC<sup>3</sup> and republican nationalists came to a head during the Battle of the Bogside in 1969. Civil unrest continued well into the 1970s, which caused a mass migration of Protestants moving from the Cityside to the Waterside across the Foyle. According to census data, between 1971 and 1991, the number of Protestants living on the Cityside decreased by 83.4% (Moore).

Ilex has recognized the significance of this change in their report: “The research noted that the city has undergone substantial demographic change, most notably religious (over the last 40 years) and ethnic (especially with the recent arrival of migrant workers). The city has become more segregated and this is reinforced by the physical barrier of the River Foyle (Peace and Reconciliation Indicators, 18).” The barrier the Foyle creates has had a profound impact upon the city. The Craigavon Bridge built in 1933, allows traffic and pedestrians to cross the river south of the city center. The Foyle Bridge, located on the opposite side was built in 1984 and supports car traffic only. Both of these bridges are located away from the city center and only the Craigavon supports foot traffic. However, these bridges did little to encourage cross-community interaction. They function simply as a transport mechanism and lack any ideological background or purpose. Therefore, up until the opening of the Peace Bridge, which connected the two banks directly with the city center and the Ebrington Barracks site, there was little incentive for interaction between the two sides.

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<sup>3</sup> RUC stands for the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the former police service in Northern Ireland. The RUC was often deemed biased by Catholic nationalists in favor of the Protestant community.



Water has often been used as a demarcation line of territory. Rivers, lakes, and oceans are concise visible markers to separate two areas. The River Foyle has acted as a barrier throughout history, from the siege to the migration of Protestants to the Waterside throughout the Troubles and continues to play a significant role in shaping the city.

### **Different Sides, Different History**

The difference between the previous bridges of the River Foyle and the Peace Bridge is the development that has taken place at either end of the bridge, especially in regards to Ebrington Barracks. The barracks is located on the eastern bank of the River Foyle directly across from the Guildhall Square. The construction of the barracks began in 1841. A number of Georgian style buildings were contained inside the walled area built as a star fort. Over the years as the needs and uses of the barracks shifted, the Ebrington site expanded outside the walls, boasting over 100 buildings in what is now a 26-acre site (Conservation Statement). Buildings have been demolished throughout the years, but 19 buildings from the original 1841 construction still remain.

Ebrington Barracks was used in both World Wars and proved to be an essential part of the war effort during World War II. According to Professor J.W. Blake in his book, *Northern Ireland in the Second World War*:

Londonderry held the key to victory in the Atlantic. It became our most westerly base for the repair, the working up and refuelling of destroyers, corvettes and frigates. By that critical spring (1943) when battle for the security of our Atlantic lifelines finally turned our way, Londonderry was the most important escort base in the north-western

approaches. Everybody at Londonderry co-operated in this supreme effort and all was controlled from Combined Naval and Air Headquarters, housed in Magee College.

(History of Ebrington)

Despite this rich history, Ebrington seems to be remembered most for its role during the Troubles. According to Ebrington site manager Alan Armstrong, “During the Troubles, it would have been seen as the army peering out and the people peering in.” The barracks remained open until 2003 when the effects of the Good Friday Agreement began to be reflected in the reduction of violence. During the 1970s and 1980s, the barracks became a symbol of British rule, especially to those who aligned themselves with republican nationalist beliefs, and therefore became a target of many attacks. According to a report titled: “Conservation Statement on the Heritage Value on Ebrington Barracks” produced by the Environment and Heritage Service in Northern Ireland:

[Ebrington Barracks] has been used as the headquarters of Army 8th Brigade throughout most of the Troubles. This area covered the western of four command regions in the Province. Its parade ground has doubled as a helicopter pad and the link to the river has been used for quick connections to the other riverside base: Fort George and for river patrols. The IRA attacked the base a number of times during the period. A car bomb in the early seventies caused the main entrance to be relocated from Limavady Road, soldiers at the landing quay were attacked in the late 1980s and a bomb damaged the Browning Drive entrance to the base in the early nineties, causing the guard house to be rebuilt. (Conservation Statement)

These attacks continued as recently as a 2001 mortar attack on the base, which caused roof

damage (Conservation Statement). Although the city of Derry~Londonderry has enjoyed relative peace over the past few years, there is evidence that the memory of occupation is still present in the minds of nationalist republicans in Derry~Londonderry.

For the Protestant unionist population, the historical legacy that is carried on today extends as far back as the Siege of Derry, which also shares a history with the Ebrington area. The site on the east bank of the River Foyle, the current site of the barracks, marks the area of the former “Strong’s Orchard,” the point that was used by the Jacobite army to bombard the city with cannon fire in 1689 during the siege. When you visit the city of Derry~Londonderry today, it is impossible not to encounter the preserved historical record of the Siege of Derry in some way. The physical walls that kept the Jacobite army at bay have become an important part of the city’s identity. Tourists are able to walk the walls with a guide who explains the events of the time. There are also information boards throughout the city marking key historical sites of significance and a number of museums housing artifacts and displays of the event.

### **Creating an Identity Through Commemoration**

But what is most striking about the Protestant memory of the Siege of Derry and the Catholic memory of the Troubles is how this history manifests itself in present day. Celebrations of the siege, originating in 1690 still exist today. On the second Saturday in August, the Apprentice Boys organize an entire day of ceremony to commemorate the breaking of the boom and the relief provided by the troops of King William of Orange. The events include: a church service at St. Columb’s Cathedral, a “Relief of Derry” pageant, and the main parade. According to “The Siege Heroes Trail” website, up to 10,000 Apprentice Boys from all around the world take part in these celebrations (Siege Heroes Trail). Celebrations such as this can elicit violence

of some nature as they are often seen as celebrations of the Protestant unionist identity.

Catholic nationalists have their own ways of expressing their identity. In the Bogside<sup>4</sup> it is difficult to find a street that does not possess some sort of commemoration that acknowledges the many deaths that shook their community throughout the conflict. Most notable is the Bloody Sunday Memorial; a granite stone erected to the 14 people who died as a result of the Bloody Sunday shootings. When I visited, it was clear that the monument was well maintained: a small wreath and a bouquet of fresh flowers lay propped against the stone. A minute down the road from this monument stands the Free Derry Wall, created in 1969 to mark the boundary for the RUC and the British Army, separating the Bogside from the rest of the city (Kerr). This wall continues to have political and historical significance in present day and was most recently the site of celebrations of the death of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's (See Methodology).

Each of these commemorations, although different in nature, keep a particular collective history alive for each side. According to Dominic Bryan in his article, "The Mass Media, Orange Parades and the Discourse on Tradition," demonstrations such as the events on "Relief of Derry" day, "offer a legitimisation from the past. This image of stasis is crucial to its ideological strength (40)." The same could be said about the protests of Margaret Thatcher's death around the Free Derry Wall. Each event remains to be contentious for opposing political or denominational groups, but each side conducts these displays as a method of defining their own identity. When these symbols of the past hold such an important role in the lives of people today, disagreements and division within the city arise as each display becomes a competition.

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<sup>4</sup> The Bogside is an area of Derry~Londonderry that is predominantly Catholic, located just outside the walls.

## Writing a New Historical Narrative

*“History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.” –Maya Angelou*

As a history major, I have always been fascinated in the process by which history is recorded and remembered. Statesman and historian Winston Churchill once said, “History is written by the victors,” but in the context of Northern Ireland, the peace process has been focused on ensuring that there are no victors. Each side of the conflict has chosen a different history, but with the choice to accept one history and reject another, the division in society is perpetuated. However, if a new shared space, free from sectarian interpretations of history, is created, this allows for the writing of a new historical narrative that can be embraced by the community as a whole.

Based on the interviews conducted, I believe the Peace Bridge is the focal point of the new historical narrative being constructed in Derry~Londonderry. The curving path, the sweeping trusses, and the bright white supports emerging from the water are symbolic of a fresh start and possess such a unique style that the bridge cannot help but draw attention against the backdrop of the old city. One man I spoke to on the bridge commented that he loved the construction: “It’s nice to have modern architecture in the old city. It stands out as something new (See Appendix 2).” With this new architecture comes the freedom to create new memories, unencumbered by the constraints of different historical interpretations.

## **Unlocking the Lost History of Ebrington**

This concept of starting fresh is especially true with the redevelopment of Ebrington Barracks. The barracks, which was functional from its opening in 1841 until its closing in 2003, was a militarized space off-limits to the people of Derry~Londonderry. The buildings carried a

heavy history of resentment from many republican nationalists who viewed the barracks as a symbol of British rule and occupation. According to Armstong, Ilex has worked to create a new historical narrative for Ebrington, exposing a part of history that has been forgotten by many in the area. Armstong believes that the opening of the Peace Bridge has made the public more aware of the historical heritage that exists at Ebrington: “When we initially took over the barracks, I believe a sizable minority at least, maybe a majority, of people said, ‘knock it down.’ But once we opened it up, people got to know about the star fort and people got to know about the history behind the barrack blocks and why they were designed that way, et cetera...and it had nothing to do with Northern Ireland (See Appendix 3).”



**Ebrington Barracks taken from Cityside**

As a part of public outreach, Ilex has conducted tours of the areas for locals, telling the story of the importance of the site in terms of social history. These tours help to add depth to the

story of Ebrington Barracks, which possessed a reputation marred by the Troubles. There are also plans to expand this rediscovery of the heritage of the site through the proposed Maritime Museum, which is intended to be based in two listed buildings at Ebrington. The Mayor of Derry, Kevin Campbell, was quoted in the Derry Journal as saying, “The development of the Maritime Museum and Archive Centre at Ebrington will highlight the importance of our city’s maritime heritage and illustrate the international significance of these collections and stories (Maritime Museum).” The regeneration of Ebrington and the proposed Maritime Museum have unlocked a lost heritage about the history of the city that is a universal story, free from the weight of sectarian agendas, to be shared by the whole city.

### **Neutral Symbols**

During one interview conducted on the bridge, I encountered two friends out for a walk together. When asked if they would answer a few questions about the bridge they were delighted and said, “You couldn’t have asked two better people to talk about this bridge.” When asked to elaborate, they said, “We often joke that this is our bridge because we use it so much. We just love it.” Out of the ten interviews I conducted on the bridge in a two-week span of time, 9 out of 10 people gave the bridge positive reviews (See Appendix 2). Although this is only a small snapshot of public opinion, I believe the overall reception to the Peace Bridge has been positive and this claim is supported through comprehensive studies such as a field survey administered in June 2011. According to the data collected, 84.07% of people from the Cityside and 81.82% of people from the Waterside said they would use the Peace Bridge (Face-to-Face Field Survey). This data was based on surveys conducted a few weeks before the official opening. Although it

was partly in jest, the term “our bridge” speaks volumes about the neutrality of the space and the importance the bridge has played in the redevelopment of the idea of a shared future.

Stephen Ryan noted that the phrase, “A Shared Future” is often used in reference to the Northern Ireland peace process, during his lecture on Conflict Transformation (Ryan). He suggests that in order for a shared future to be achieved, a new language must be created to replace the controversial language of the past. Bryonie Reid agrees with the idea of a new language in an article from the journal *Cultural Geographies*:

Unionists and Protestants have dominated the shaping of Belfast and Derry, economically, politically, and socially. However, throughout the gradual breakdown of the former unionist state, these cities are demonstrating their fragility and tendency to elude total control, threatening unionist and nationalist definitions of place and belonging based on territorial ownership, and exposing the need for new definitions. (Reid 486)

The need for this new language is closely connected, as Reid notes, with the differing historical memories within Northern Ireland and how those memories translate into territorial control through the use of symbols. According to Neil Jarman in his article titled, *Painting Landscapes: The Place of Murals in the Symbolic Construction of Urban Space*, visual displays (in this case, murals) in a public space can have a profound affect on how the location is interpreted:

For as well as being elaborate visual displays, the murals are also objects. As such they are more artefact than art. As arefacts they are produced to be seen as fixed sites and in specific locales, and an extension of their significance is generated by a semiotic dynamic which involves the images taking meaning from their locations and the location in turn having a different significance because of the paintings. (81)



This idea is not isolated to murals, but extends to any type of symbol that carries meaning for a group: flags, banners, graffiti, monuments, plaques, parades, protests, or any other display in public. Protests of Margaret Thatcher's death take on a different meaning when they are staged in front of the Free Derry Wall in the Bogside (See Methodology) just as a mural reading "Still Under siege" carries more significance when it is located in the small Protestant area of the Fountain.



**Free Derry Wall in the Bogside**



### **Wall in the Fountain**

In historically rich cities such as Derry~Londonderry, it is difficult to find an area that does not have a story. However, if space is created or recreated to redefine this historical symbolism, which was formerly polarized to identify with one group or another, a new social climate can be created without threat to either group.

### **Creating Shared Space**

The government of Northern Ireland has identified the importance of shared space in the peace process. In the report, *A Shared Future: Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland*, produced by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in March 2005, Minister of State for Northern Ireland John Spellar noted: “Good relations must be based on partnership, equality and mutual respect. It cannot be built on unequal foundations. It must be built upon the significant progress that has been achieved to deliver equality of

opportunity right across Northern Ireland (A Shared Future).” The report also contains specific points for reclaiming shared space:

1. Developing and protecting town and city centres as safe and welcoming places for people of all walks of life.
2. Creating safe and shared space for meeting, sharing, playing, working and living.
3. Freeing the public realm from threat, aggression and intimidation while allowing for legitimate expression of cultural celebration. (A Shared Future)

This report was one of the many strategies and policies used in developing the idea of the Peace Bridge. In the original Ilex project proposal, *Peace Bridge: Peace and Reconciliation Indicators*, June 2010 it states the purpose of the bridge:

The construction of the Peace Bridge will create a new physical shared space in Derry~Londonderry. The river itself is a neutral area but for many Protestants the significance of the river as an ethnic boundary and the consequential and emotion barrier that it has created added to the sense of alienation that they felt over the period of the Troubles. The construction of the bridge will create a new neutral area which will be free from symbols therefore not linking one community or another. (25)

The points above relate to the creation of shared space deal with the theme of feeling safe (physically, emotionally, ideologically) in the public realm. In a survey conducted before the opening of the Peace Bridge, one resident said that the location of the Peace Bridge was not ideal: “People would not feel safe walking from the town to that particular area of the Waterside (Face-to-Face Field Survey).” This uneasiness about walking in certain areas is a feeling felt by

some in the city. For Jeanette Warke, this is a reality the children and teenagers in her youth club face every day:

We are living here in this small Protestant community on the west bank. There's no shared space here at all for us. Definitely not. I mean there is a park just adjacent to the Fountain at the bottom of the road, but our kids can't use that park. Anytime they try and use it they're stoned out. They are called Orange "B's" and all these terrible names. It's just a space we can't utilize at all. Yet there is no park here in the Fountain. That's very sad. But I couldn't name you a shared space on the Derry side at all. Our kids here are hemmed in. Our kids here can't even use the shopping center unless there's a group of them together. They can't use the corner shop unless there's a group. There are no shops in the Fountain area. There's nowhere user-friendly for the young people here. (See Appendix 3)

The Peace Bridge has proved to be a safe haven for these children and young adults. The Youth Club plans weekly field trips over the bridge to St. Columb's Park in the summertime and they have never had any safety concerns with the spaces around the bridge. In fact, Ebrington on the Waterside was a highlight for Warke, who referred to the barracks as the "crown jewel of the city." She believes that the Peace Bridge has successfully created shared space and has had a profound effect on people's opinion about the surrounding areas, especially the barracks, as well as created a safe and inviting environment for all citizens of Derry~Londonderry to enjoy, regardless of religion:

Unfortunately, [Ebrington] had a negative history then when the army moved in... The army coming in and moving in overnight because of the Troubles. So that gave out a

negative feeling about the barracks. I myself have been to concerts at Ebrington...I'm not joking you. The atmosphere was unbelievable. And I don't think anybody cared about where you came from or what your religion was. Nothing. It was people, and it was people together, and people enjoying themselves, and that was so emotional and so moving. (See Appendix 3)

Alan Armstrong comments that the public perception about Ebrington will continue to evolve:

We've had concerts running in the square. People from all over the city and beyond come into it. So it very much seen as a shared neutral space. And as time goes on I think people's memories are dulled. We are talking today about a shared neutral space and soon we will just be talking about another public space. And I think even now it can be seen as just another public space. (See Appendix 3)

The introduction of a safe, shared space within the city of Derry~Londonderry has helped to encourage people from all backgrounds to engage with one another with the fear of encroaching on the wrong "territory." The bridge has opened up public spaces on either side that are free from the old symbols of sectarianism and become a new symbol for the city as a whole.

### Forming a New Identity

*"Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards."* –Søren Kierkegaard

Creating a new identity for the city of Derry~Londonderry does not mean covering up the past, but rather re-directing focus to the future while embracing the past. Through the opening up of spaces such as Ebrington, people are able to engage together and create a new identity of a

shared city. The Peace Bridge is a focal point in the identity formation of Derry~Londonderry and is currently being used as a tool to redefine the city.

### **The Brand of Derry~Londonderry**

According to prominent Derry businessman Sir Roy McNulty in a BBC news article published in June 2011, he believed the Peace Bridge would become a: "recognisable landmark. It is not as big as the bridge across Sydney Harbour, but for Derry I think it will provide a memorable image and I think people will see it on postcards and images of the city. It will stand for Derry (Derry's new 'peace bridge')." Evidence of this can be seen walking into any gift shop in the city: postcards, jewelry, and magnets, all depicting the unique shape of the Peace Bridge.



**City of Culture Cup**



**Bridge-inspired Jewelry**

In addition to this, the Peace Bridge is featured in the logo for the 2013 UK City of Culture. This logo is used on banners, brochures, websites, and any venue promoting the City of Culture. According to the City of Culture's website,

The Peace Bridge, in keeping with our mission, helps the city tell its new story – in this case, telling the story through the brand. Internationally, the bridge has already become a recognised symbol of our new city and connectedness. And, we believe there is no more fitting image with which we could welcome and attract the world to Derry-Londonderry.

(The Brand)

The bridge has also been the focal point for many of the City of Culture Events including the opening ceremonial fireworks display, and the peace parade for the Dalai Lama event, in addition to the role it has played as a connector for events at the Ebrington parade grounds and The Venue, a performance space with a capacity of over 2,000. The emergence of Peace Bridge

memorabilia and its feature in the City of Culture logo seems to be an attempt to re-define the identity of the city.

### **New Identity, New Symbols**

Before the Peace Bridge, the iconic representation of peace in Derry~Londonderry was the famous “Hands Across the Divide” statue. Situated just at the end of Craigavon Bridge, it is one of the first things you see when you enter the city. The statue itself stands in the middle of a roundabout; two men perched on independent piles of stone, each reaching one hand out across the divide with a slight space between the hands. The design for the statue was proposed by sculptor Maurice Harron, who entered his idea of two men shaking hands into a contest for an installation in Carlisle Square. After winning the competition, Harron decided to change his original design and create a space between the two hands to signify the tensions that still surrounded the two communities within the city and the reconciliation that was still a work in progress (Sculptor Maurice).

When the sculpture was completed in 1991, Northern Ireland was still in turmoil. Harron’s statue was symbolic of a future that the city of Derry~Londonderry would not experience for nearly a decade after it’s installation. This year, Harron’s art was reexamined by a new sculptor who used the iconic statue as a mould for his own artwork, a transparent sculpture of the space between the two hands. The Syrian artist, Khaled Barakeh noted in an interview in February 2013: “The double naming of the Derry~Londonderry, the separate housing, schools, taxi companies, are a mimesis of the other, replicas of the same, only in different colours. I wish the future of Derry and here would be better, that that this space will be completely gone one day. Maybe one day we will come up with a sculpture and put it in the middle (Derry’s iconic



‘divided hands’ meet)."

Perhaps the day for Barakeh’s sculpture to fill the space between the hands has come. Looking at the “Hands Across the Divide” monument today, one could say that it represents a time when the people of Derry~Londonderry struggled to interact with one another. Today, the space between the hands for the majority of people grows smaller by the day. According to Social Development Minister Nelson McCausland quoted in a UTV news article: "Over time the bridge will become an iconic representation that will define this city. Physically and metaphorically it links two communities and we hope will encourage greater levels of positive engagement between them. It represents our aspirations to work towards a shared and welcoming city that everyone in the community enjoys and can feel welcome in (Derry’s Peace Bridge Opened).” The Peace Bridge is a physical the bridge across the divide that is an active mover and shaper of the social climate as well as a symbolic representation of the progress that has been made in terms of the peace process. It has encouraged a positive change in movement, attitudes, and morale of the city as a whole. The Peace Bridge is redefining the city of Derry~Londonderry as a progressive city that is able to embrace the past, present, and future.

### **Part 3: Conclusion**

*“Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.” –John F. Kennedy*

When I began this project, I did not imagine that the Peace Bridge would have such a profound impact on the city of Derry~Londonderry. As an outsider, the bridge is seen only an impressive piece of architecture. However, once you dig beneath the surface and discover the history of division within the city, you begin to understand the significance of the physical

bridging over the River Foyle. I believe Jeanette Warke said it best when she commented: “The Peace Bridge is a bridge. But the Peace Bridge has brought a lot of people together. It’s like a big arm reaching out and pulling people together (See Appendix 3).”

This bridging of communities begins with the bridging of history. The interpretation and use of history in present day is a powerful tool. In Northern Ireland, history and the ways in which it is commemorated continue to be the center of contentious debate. The use of history as a basis for forming and legitimizing the identity of certain groups has led to a stalling of the peace process in some areas. The Peace Bridge in Derry~Londonderry is a part of a project that uses urban development and the creation of new and recreation of old structures in order to encourage more interaction between both sides of the River Foyle, an important part of Derry~Londonderry’s geography and an essential part of the history of division and separation in the city.

With the weight of history and memory upon the city that has lasted for generations, it may be difficult to understand how a bridge could help a community overcome an inherited historical memory. The success of the Peace Bridge in overcoming the hindrance of history rests with the creation of a new historical narrative for the city and the introduction of shared space. The new bridge is free of the symbols that so often mark the territory of one group or another throughout the city. The bridge also connects the city center to Ebrington Barracks, a space that had been closed to the public previously. The story of Ebrington as a base for the British Army during the Troubles is quickly fading as the lost history of Ebrington’s role during World War I and World War II, reemerges; this is a history that the city as a whole can share and embrace together. Because of the creation of this new historical narrative, the city of Derry~Londonderry

has been able to redefine its identity and project a message of a forward progress that acknowledges a fresh start. At the center of this new identity is the Peace Bridge and its symbolic bridging between not only two groups, but also the past and the present.

This field study focused on the question: can a bridge help a community overcome an inherited historical memory? Based on the research compiled, I have concluded that the Peace Bridge has become the keystone in the formation of a new identity for the city of Derry~Londonderry. However, this does not mean that the city has addressed all its problems. The Peace Bridge is an important step in facilitating a peaceful environment, but it is not the whole solution. As American President John F. Kennedy said, “Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.” When talking with Jeanette Warke, it is clear that the Peace Bridge has made a positive impact on the Protestant community in the Fountain. However, Warke also acknowledges that the lack of shared space on the cityside for Protestant youth leaves them with the feeling of isolation within their own community.

As this field study was constrained to a month-long period, there are many questions that remain unanswered: What other plans are there to expand shared space within the city? Is there a difference in opinion about the bridge between demographics? Are there plans to address the isolation Protestant youth in the Fountain feel and the lack of shared space available to them? Is the Peace Bridge a novelty that will eventually wear out? Will public opinion shift as time goes on? Is the bridge a lasting symbol of the city? These are possible questions for further study. Despite these questions, this field study is a small sketch of the transformation of

Derry~Londonderry through the lens of the Peace Bridge and I hope this process will continue to develop and continue the formation of a peaceful identity for future generations.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Survey Questions For Users of the Bridge**

1. Do you live in Derry~Londonderry?
  - a. If so, how often do you use the bridge and what do you use it for?
  - b. If not, what are you using the bridge for during your stay?
2. What do you see as the main purpose of the bridge?
3. What is your current opinion of the bridge?
4. Has the bridge changed your habits?
5. How has your knowledge of the history of the area shaped your opinion of the bridge?  
\*This question was changed to: Do you know anything about the history of this area?
6. Do you have any additional comments about the bridge?

### **Appendix 2: Field Notes - Bridge Survey Data**

1. Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 Time: 11:30 am # of participants: 3	Demographic: 3 women (a,b 30-40, c 20s-30) Residents of Derry a. has used bridge numerous times b. and c. were using it for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> time Purpose: to make it more convenient for people on the Waterside to access the city center a. and c. have positive views of the bridge. Like the physical construction/shape of it. b. Has a negative view. Believes too much money was spent on the bridge when it could have been spent on creating more jobs. She feels the bridge was built for tourists rather than the people of Derry (especially for the city of culture).
2. Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 Time: 3:20 pm # of participants: 2	Demographic: 2 women (30-40) Residents of Derry (one originally from Derry, another from Donegal now living on the Waterside) Both use the bridge all the time Purpose: for leisure, pleasure, shopping, community Opinion: gorgeous architecture, great for cross-community



	<p>interaction, makes shopping easier especially since you can park on the Waterside and walk over</p> <p>Comments: The woman who lives on the Waterside says she goes to the city center much more.</p> <p>They believe it definitely encourages cross-community interaction. She now uses St. Columb's Park and never had before. The women loved the bridge so much they jokingly renamed it after themselves. "This is our bridge"</p>
<p>3. Date: Saturday, April 12, 2013 Time: 12:20pm # of participants: 1</p>	<p>Demographic: 1 male (30-40)</p> <p>Originally from England, now a resident of Derry living on the Waterside</p> <p>He finds the bridge makes it more convenient to cross between sides. He spent time on both sides before the bridge was built so this makes commuting much easier.</p> <p>He likes the construction of the bridge and the interesting shape. It's nice to have modern architecture in the old city. It stands out as something new.</p>
<p>4. Date: Saturday, April 12, 2013 Time: 12:30pm # of participants: 2</p>	<p>Demographic: 1 male, 1 female (20-30)</p> <p>She is from the Republic, he is from England. They now live in England and are visiting family in Derry</p> <p>This was their first time walking over the bridge. They are just out for a leisurely walk around the city.</p> <p>Reminds the man of the Millennium Bridge in London</p> <p>They are not sure of the significance of the bridge and don't know any history about it.</p>
<p>5. Date: Saturday, April 12, 2013 Time: 12:40pm # of participants: 1</p>	<p>Demographic: 1 male (30-40)</p> <p>Lives on the Waterside</p> <p>Uses bridge once a week</p> <p>Believes the purpose of the bridge is to get to the city center (after a few seconds, he added recreation)</p> <p>Opinion of the bridge is positive. He thinks it is fantastic.</p> <p>It has changed his habits and his route of travel</p> <p>History does influence his opinion. You can't separate it out.</p> <p>*Sounded like he could have said more about this but he was in a hurry to get somewhere.</p>
<p>6. Date: Saturday, April 19, 2013 Time: 11:40pm # of participants: 1</p>	<p>Demographic: 1 male (20-30)</p> <p>Works at a Bogside Youth Club</p> <p>Was currently photographing the bridge (time lapse) for a video project from the Ebrington Barracks side</p> <p>Enjoying the symbolism of Derry</p> <p>Likes the architecture</p> <p>Believes it is a positive things for the city</p>

### Appendix 3: Transcriptions and Notes of Interviews

*Below is the transcription of two of three interviews conducted during this field study. Transcriptions were done soon after completion of the interview, upon listening to the voice recording. Key quotations have been directly transcribed while the rest of the interview has been summarized. The third interview (Angela Hughes) was not recorded and therefore is not included in this section.*

Name: Alan Armstrong

Date: April 15, 2013

Time: 12:00 pm

Location: Ebrington Barracks, Ilex offices

Type of Interview: Formal, sit down

Initial observations immediately following interview (nonverbal, observations, etc...): Very chatty, personable after the interview. In the beginning, he felt that he was the wrong person to be talking to. He kept telling me I should speak to someone in "strategy." He seemed a bit distracted. He took two phone calls during the interview. He really opened up after about the history of the site once the recorder was turned off. He noted the significance of the barracks and the start fort as a piece of history. The design of the fort allowed for air to flow in and out of the buildings in order to reduce sickness.

Summary:

- Alan Armstrong, site manager for Ilex
  - Works with contractors
  - Maintenance of the peace bridge currently
- Public perception of the barracks
  - Peace bridge opened up the barracks to the public
  - "Made people more aware of the built heritage" (1:25)
  - Tours of social history of the site (1:40)
  - "During the Troubles, it would have been seen as the army peering out and the people peering in." (1:45)
  - Original opinion of the public when the site was proposed to be developed was to knock it down, but now that the site has been opened up, people are more interested in it.
  - "When we initially took over the barracks, I believe a sizable minority at least, maybe a majority of people said, 'knock it down.' But once we opened it up, people got to know about the star fort and people got to know about the history behind the barrack blocks and why they were designed that way, et cetera...and nothing to do with Northern Ireland"
  - "We had lost so much of our built heritage particularly in this time through bombing and even more through people just saying "Just knock it down," and we didn't really start looking at our built social heritage until the early seventies."

- Heritage lost (2:30). A new appreciation for this heritage was discovered in the 1970s. Before, buildings were proposed to be knocked down.
- Barracks occupied by army and navy
- “The bridge itself has become a destination in its own right. People, tourists especially, love walking bridges...And when we put a heritage product and culture product on the site, which we will do in the years to come, then it means tourists are more likely to stay here.” (3:45)
- “We’ve had concerts running in the square. People from all over the city and beyond come into it. So it very much seen as a shared neutral space. And as time goes on I think people’s memories are dulled. We are talking today about a shared neutral space and soon we will just be talking about another public space. And I think even now it can be seen as just another public space. People don’t really think, ‘Oh, I wouldn’t go over there or there.’ (4:00)
- Tourist attraction should increase retail sales
  - Problem: Derry is currently just a stop on the way to Donegal or Giant’s Causeway
  - Need to retain people a bit longer
- Development perspective
  - Public realm beautiful
  - Unemployment – largest problem
    - Financial digital sector jobs
  - Public realm: “brain drain” on students
    - If there is good public realm, students will return to the city. If not, then they will just leave
  - Bridge and the public realm is the foundation but we really need jobs
- History of the site
  - Tours
    - Walk around the walls
  - Buildings
  - Social cultural history
  - The fort as a reflection of society
  - Troubles was only a small part of it all
  - Tours generally locals
  - Some tours may do that area
- Shared feeling of ownership?
  - “I think people just see [Ebrington] as another square now. It’s Ebrington; the army is gone. It’s just another square like Guildhall Square. Maybe even think it’s nicer.”
- Shared Space’s role in the peace process
  - “It reinforces the peace.”

- Peace dividend

Name: Jeanette Warke

Date: April 17, 2013

Time: 5:30pm

Location: Cathedral Youth Center, The Fountain, Derry~Londonderry

Type of Interview: Formal, sit-down

Initial observations immediately following interview (nonverbal, observations, etc...): Extremely busy. Had to reschedule interview until later in the day. Completely focus when she sat down and gave me her complete attention.

Summary:

- Reactions towards peace bridge (1:00-2:00)
  - During the initial proposal, many people in the Fountain area had negative attitudes
  - Too much money, waste, no one was going to use it
    - “At the beginning when the idea of the peace bridge was made public, there was a lot of negative attitudes to the amount money it was costing and nobody was going to use it...”
    - “It is seen now as a great healer between the communities of the Waterside and the Derry side. And to be honest I love it and it gives you such a great feeling to walk over it.”
  - She participated in the planning process
    - Saw it as something special
    - Seen as a great healer
    - Great asset to youth club
      - Field trips to St. Columb’s Park
      - “It has been such a great asset to our youth club because for our summer schools, we don’t have a lot of money. We just pack up big picnics and take the kids down over the Peace Bridge and we go to St. Columb’s Park and we spend the whole day there. That doesn’t cost us very much.”
    - Meeting old friends
      - Conversation
      - Communication
      - “There is always a conversation going all the time on that Peace Bridge.”
    - Healing community relations
  - Do People on the Waterside feel the same way?
    - First reaction was negative for some
      - Believe it would encourage more vandalism on the Waterside

- Initial problems of vandalism in St. Columb's Park
  - Quick link with the city now
    - Positive
- Teenage groups
  - Football in the park
- Do you think that the city needs more shared spaces?
  - Yes
  - “There is no shared space on the Derry side at all.”
  - “We are living here in this small Protestant community on the west bank. There’s no shared space here at all for us. Definitely not. I mean there is a park just adjacent to the Fountain at the bottom of the road, but our kids can’t use that park. Anytime they try and use it they’re stoned out. They are called Orange “B’s” and all these terrible names. It’s just a space we can’t utilize at all. Yet there is no park here in the Fountain. That’s very sad. But I couldn’t name you a shared space on the Derry side at all. Our kids here are hemmed in. Our kids here can’t even use the shopping center unless there’s a group of them together. They can’t use the corner shop unless there’s a group. There are no shops in the Fountain area. There’s nowhere user-friendly for the young people here.”
  - “But the Peace Bridge is fine. We all go together and it’s fine. And at the end of the day you are walking over towards the Waterside.”
  - No shared space on the Derry side
  - Lack of parks for Fountain kids
    - Pushed out
  - No Park in the Fountain
- The Fountain under attack
  - Margaret Thatcher’s death
  - Keeping teens inside with classes
  - 150 people left the Bogside that night
- What would be a good project to help community development in the Fountain area? (8:40)
  - JOBS!
  - “Jobs for young people. There’s no jobs out there.”
  - Need big businesses here
  - “We need big business, big companies coming in here. That would put more work into the town and generate people’s attitudes or confidence and their whole way of living. And also give them pennies in their pocket. Everybody would benefit.”
  - Suspicious of wages spent for Ilex
    - People leave constantly
    - Titles with large salaries, but what are they doing?
  - “I think they need to get their thinking caps on and they need to start looking at this city. They need to start looking at what the benefit for the

young people is because they are the future of this city whether they like it or not. They've got to start targeting jobs and attracting companies in here to get these young people jobs and keep them here instead of them taking off to other countries.

- Gap in who they have been targeting
  - Ebrington Barracks
    - Cafés
    - Offices
    - Development is too slow, lack of progress
  - Ft. George? What is happening
- Change people's perception of history
- "Ebrington Barracks was always a very important part of the town. When the Sea Eagle was there, and then the army moved in.
    - Pride, Americans in the city
    - Navy
  - "Unfortunately, it had a negative history then when the army moved in... The army coming in and moving in overnight because of the Troubles. So that gave out a negative feeling about the barracks."
  - People don't know enough about the history
  - Maritime museum
  - Recognition of all the different aspects of history in terms of the barracks
  - "I am delighted to say that a lot of Catholic from this west bank are using it and there's no threat, no intimidation."
  - "I myself have been to concerts at Ebrington... I'm not joking you. The atmosphere was unbelievable. And I don't think anybody care about where you came from what was your religion. Nothing. It was people and it was people together and people enjoying themselves and that was so emotional and so moving."
  - Tea Dance event, 800 people
    - "To see all these older people coming together and renewing friendships with people they've been separated from. It was amazing."
  - Barracks jewel in the crown of the city.
  - Opened up the entire city
- "The Peace Bridge is a bridge. But the Peace Bridge has brought a lot of people together. It's like a big arm reaching out and pulling people together."
- The best thing that ever happened to this city